

Message Text

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61

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

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P 191717Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6439

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

US MISSION NATO 1036

USEC BRUSSELS

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: LARGELY FAVORABLE PRESS INITIAL REACTION TO DECLARATION OF
GOVERNMENT

REF: MADRID 5505

1. THE MAJOR SUNDAY PAPERS ON JULY 18 GAVE FAVORABLE
FRONT PAGE ATTENTION TO THE GOVT'S PROGRAMMATIC DECLARATION
OF JULY 17 (REFTEL), WITH HEADLINES VARYING IN DEGREE OF
ENTHUSIASM AS FOLLOWS: "POSITIVE AND HOPEFUL RECEPTION OF
GOVT DECLARATION" (MONARCHIST ABC), "PROGRAMMATIC DECLARATION
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RECEIVED, IN GENERAL, WITH HOPE" (CATHOLIC INDEPENDENT YA),

THE MOST OPEN AND LIBERAL DECLARATION" (NATIONAL MOVEMENTS ARRIABA), AND "MODERATE OPPOSITION CONFIDENCE IN GOVT DECLARATION (LIBERAL INDEPENDENT EL PAIS).

2. ALL FOUR PAPERS REPORTED THE BASICALLY FAVORABLE TREATMENT ACCORDED THE DECLARATION BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS AND MEDIA, WITH EL PAIS NOTING HOWEVER THAT NOT ALL COMMENTS WERE DEVOID OF SKEPTICISM. THE NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST COVERAGE WAS GIVEN PROMINENT PLAY. ABC OBSERVED THAT THE AMNESTY RECEIVED THE GREATEST ATTENTION BY THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA, FOLLOWED BY THE INVITATION TO THE MODERATE OPPOSITION FOR DIALOGUE.

3. AS COULD BE EXPECTED, THE NATIONAL PRESS REACTION VARIED WITH THE NEWSPAPER'S POLITICAL INCLINATION. THUS, ARRIABA TOOK THE MOST POSITIVE LINE, CITING "UNANIMITY" OF SPANISH AND FOREIGN FAVORABLE OPINION. WITH RESPECT TO THE POLITICAL GROUPS OPPOSITION AS WELL AS THE "ESTABLISHMENT-" THEIR REACTION WAS IN GENERAL POSITIVE ALTHOUGH WITH CERTAIN VARIATIONS, ESPECIALLY ON THE PART OF THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION. INCIDENTALLY, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT SUAREZ (IN VIEW OF HIS NATIONAL MOVEMENT BACKGROUND) HAS MADE SURE THAT ARRIABA WILL NOW REFLECT THE GOVT POINT OF VIEW ON MAJOR ISSUES.

4. ABC REPORTED THAT FAVORABLE INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS WERE ECHOED WITHIN SPANISH POLITICAL SPECTRUM. ALTHOUGH THE DIFFICULTIES WERE ALSO FLAGGED. WHILE OBSERVERS WERE AWAITING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF INTENTIONS, "FAVORABLE OPINION IS PRACTICALLY GENERAL IN SCOPE. IN A MORE CAUTIOUS VEIN, YA WARNED THAT POLITICAL FORCES TIRED OF PROMISES WERE WAITING FOR CONCRETE ACTS. THE DECLARATION HAD CERTAINLY NOT BEEN RECEIVED WITH HOSTILITY BUT WITH HOPE, AND THE GOVT HAD LEFT AN INITIALLY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION WITH RESPECT TO IT POLITICAL TONE AND PERFORMANCE. THERE WAS PARTICULAR INTEREST IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE AMNESTY PROPOSAL.

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5. IN ITS COMMENTARY, EL PAIS (UNIFORMLY CRITICAL OF THE PREVIOUS GOVT) NOTED THAT THE OPPOSITION HAS RECEIVED THE CABINET'S DECLARATION "WITH MORE CONFIDENCE THAN ON ANY OTHER OCCASION" BUT IS AWAITING THAT THESE INTENTIONS BE TRANSLATED SHORTLY INTO CONCRETE ACTS. EL PAIS CONTINUED THAT THE DOMINANT IMPRESSION AMONG POLITICAL OBSERVERS IS THAT IN ADDITION TO OBTAINING

AN EARLY AGREEMENT ON THESE FUNDAMENTAL MATTERS. THE
CABINET WILL HAVE TO FACE UP TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL
PRESSURES WHICH ATTEMPT TO MINIMIZE THE PRACTICAL
CONSEQUENCES OF A DECLARATION OF VIEWS WHICH MOST
OF THE OPPOSITION HAS RECEIVED WITH A "CERTAIN MARGIN
OF CONFIDENCE" THE PAPERS' POLL OF REGIME AND
OPPOSITION PERSONAGES REFLECTS THE "CAUTIOUSLY HOPEFUL"
OPINION OF THE LATTER AND CERTAIN "ECONOMIC RESERVATIONS"
TOWARD THE DECLARATION FROM THE FORMER.
STABLER

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